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Two trainees from MAPAL have set their sights on becoming German champions in CNC milling

Julian Kraus and Lukas Weiß are learning how to be professional cutting machine operators at MAPAL. They're also participating in the professional competition "WorldSkills" and have now made the final in the German championship.

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Julian Kraus from Röttingen and Lukas Weiß from Fremdingen carry out milling work with passion and precision. They enjoy working with modern CNC technology so much that they have now taken on a special challenge. Both want to become German champions in CNC milling. And they're now well on the way to achieving their goal. After all, these two young talents have already prevailed against half of their competitors from all over Germany. Now they can't wait to get to the final. They're both 20 years old and are completing their training as cutting machine operators at MAPAL in Aalen. This is the first time they'll have participated in the "WorldSkills" vocational competition. After getting through the qualification competitions, the two friends now occupy first and second place with equal points. Now that we're just a few weeks before the final round, they're getting nervous. Because it's clear to both of them: "This is just the beginning!" During the preliminary rounds the two MAPAL employees felt that team spirit was more important than success. But now, as they close in on the title, the incentive to win is growing with both of them.

The prospective cutting machine operators have been preparing for the competition at the MAPAL training centre since April. It was the trainers at MAPAL who had encouraged Weiß and Kraus to participate in the competition. "We've seen that these two have great potential," says Robin Offinger, who is supporting the trainees with their preparations. Together with 22 competitors, Weiß and Kraus completed a three-day training course at the machine manufacturer CHIRON, which is organising the

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national competition this year. As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the planned on-site event was cancelled and the training sessions took place virtually. For the qualification rounds, the two trainees travelled to the CHIRON factory in Tuttlingen and showed off their talent. The participants in the competition had to programme and then machine various steel and aluminium blanks within a specified time limit. However, the organisers did not make it easy for the young participants: "The parts were very complex and contained a variety of fit dimensions and tight tolerances," says Julian Kraus, describing the difficult task. The participants' workpieces were then measured and assessed electronically. Trainer Robin Offinger is delighted that his trainees have made it this far and is looking forward to the final with confidence: "I think they'll both be crowned champion."

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Captions:



From left to right, Julian Kraus and Lukas Weiß, apprentices at MAPAL, have made it to the finals of WorldSkills Germany.

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